

Alumni find success in radio business

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We laugh with them, we cry with them, we welcome them into our homes, cars and ears daily, but just how much do we have in common with on-air radio personalities?

For students of Ohlone College, it might be more than others. Many successful people in the radio industry come straight out of Ohlone's very own radio program and had served as on air talent for the college's radio station, KOHL.

In fact the list of Ohlone alumni active in the radio industry includes more than 200 names. The two men behind the radio program as well as KOHL, Robert L. Dochterman and Thomas Gomez, credit the overwhelming amount of Ohlone students in the radio industry to the unique approach of Ohlone's program.

Gomez, a broadcast instructor as well as an air personality for Mix 106.5 explains that Ohlone, unlike most colleges, treats "radio as an area of study," with the goal being

"to train students to be professionals."

One of the most successful Ohlone alumnis in the radio industry to date is Rob Williams of the "Rob, Arnie, and Dawn in the Morning" show which is broadcast to Sacramento and Reno.

Williams is the owner of the corporation that owns the RAD in the morning show. Having entered the Ohlone radio program at age 18, right out of high school, Williams spent four semesters in the program before landing a full-time job as a morning show DJ in South Lake Tahoe.

A few years later, Williams moved to Reno, where he continued to do mornings on the radio, as well as delved into radio management. It was at the station in Reno that the RAD in the mornings show was born.

Seven years later, because of their success in Reno, Williams and his partners were recruited to bring their broadcast to Sacramento. Not many people experience the fast-tracked success that Williams has had in the

radio industry, though Williams believes it is a combination of good genes and great mentors.

"I was light-years ahead of anyone else trying to compete with me at the age of 19 in the industry, most of it thanks to the Ohlone program," he said.

The radio industry is a broad field, with many more job opportunities than one might think; a lot of those jobs being behind the scenes. For a station to run properly it needs a program director, producers, a director of operations, engineers, traffic and news reporters and many other people, and Ohlone alumni fill many of these positions.

Williams, for example works off the air with his producer, Nick Beard, a fellow Ohlone alumni. Beard went through the Ohlone radio program years after Williams had already left, and was encouraged by Ohlone instructors to try for the job as producer of the RAD in the morning show. Because he had come out of the Ohlone program, Williams knew

that Beard would be up for the challenge and consequently gave the job to him.

Other Ohlone alumni in the radio industry include Lisa Fox, assistant to Ryan Seacrest and who is rumored to make about \$100,000 a year, April Summers from STAR 101.3, who also serves as the director of operations for news and traffic for Clear Channel in San Francisco also came from the Ohlone radio program. Alice radio's Kathy Coats is another Ohlone alumni, as is Rob Adamic, a producer for Clear Channel, and Tony Michaels from KFRC.

Radio is a billion dollar industry. Someone in Williams' position, for instance, can make enough money to afford to live luxuriously, travel constantly, buy two houses, four cars, and keep their spouse from having to work. With the Ohlone radio program, wealth and fame seem within reach for some, so it is no wonder the program is so popular with students.